01 Get H³ approved *inside your organisation.*

A playbook for the person who can see the AI-adoption problem but does not own the budget. This kit is what to read before you pitch, what to say when you pitch, what to send when they ask for more, and how to navigate your organisation to land a Sponsor who can actually carry it.

A NOTE ON TRANSPARENCY

This kit is written for the champion. If you are the executive being pitched and you found this on the public site, you are welcome to read it. The H³ stance is that the persuasion you should be subject to is one you can audit. The materials specifically for executives are the cycle one-pager and the executive folder, both linked at the bottom of this page.

What H³ is in one breath

A repeatable rhythm that turns scattered AI experimentation inside an organisation into adoption that sticks and outcomes you can measure. One cycle pairs on-site facilitation (Harvest, Hack, Harness) with months of named-owner work across the gap. The next cycle opens on visible evidence from the previous one. **Cycle 2 only runs if Cycle 1 produced motion you can see.**

What the Sponsor will commit to

Before you pitch, know what you are actually asking for. The Sponsor signs up to four things:

01 **Co-prepare in the weeks before.** Complete an intake. Help shortlist named-owner candidates. Brief leadership.

02 **Fund Cycle 1, then decide on evidence.** One fixed price. Cycle 2 runs only if Cycle 1 produced visible motion on a status page.

03 **Provide live air cover, per decision.** For each adopt-now decision in the room, on the spot. Procurement, security, time, budget.

04 **Be present, twice.** Day 1 opening circle and the full Harness session. Deliberately absent in between so the room can be honest.

If your candidate Sponsor cannot or will not do these four things, no amount of clever pitching will save Cycle 1. Pick a different Sponsor. Page 2 helps you check before you pitch.

Deeper reading you can attach or forward

Cycle one-pager · what H³ is, on one page	harvesthackharness.ai/h3-cycle-one-pager.pdf
Executive folder · the 5-page sales narrative for Sponsors	harvesthackharness.ai/h3-executive-folder.pdf
Sponsor self-qualifier · the 5-minute self-check, sent before booking	harvesthackharness.ai/h3-sponsor-self-qualifier.pdf
AI-adoption tax calculator · size what standing still already costs, in your own numbers	harvesthackharness.ai/ai-adoption-tax

02 Before you pitch, *score your candidate Sponsor.*

All three conditions must be Yes for a Sponsor to succeed at H³. If any is No, pick a different Sponsor before composing the email. If any is Maybe, the pitch is still possible but riskier; be honest in the email about which condition you are flagging.

CANDIDATE SPONSOR

Name ______________________________

Role ______________________________

THE THREE CONDITIONS

01 Authority. Can they fund Cycle 1 within their current quarter, without a formal procurement queue?

- ☐ Yes (own authority)
- ☐ Maybe (one peer's nod or board's quiet OK is enough)
- ☐ No (formal procurement or board cycle required)

02 Air cover. When a named owner needs procurement help, security fast-track, time, or budget on the spot during the on-site or the gap, can they actually unblock it?

- ☐ Yes (those calls are theirs to make today)
- ☐ Maybe (most cases, a few would need a second conversation)
- ☐ No (every adopt-now call would have to escalate upward)

03 Operational reach. Do the people who would attend Cycle 1 report to them, directly or two layers down?

- ☐ Yes (the cohort works for them)
- ☐ Maybe (about half do)
- ☐ No (different organisation, different Sponsor needed)

ANCHOR FOR THE PITCH

What is the specific recent pain you will open the email with? One sentence in your Sponsor's vocabulary.

____

____

Examples that work: "The Copilot pilot we reviewed last week, six teams signed up, two still using it." "The March off-site that produced commitments nobody owns." "The board ask about AI three weeks ago that nobody has a clean answer to."

DECISION RULE

ALL THREE YES	Proceed to the pitch frame on page 3.
ONE MAYBE	Pitch is possible. Acknowledge the soft condition in the email's last paragraph rather than hide it.
TWO+ MAYBES / ANY NO	Pick a different Sponsor candidate. Filling in this worksheet for a second name is cheaper than recovering a failed pitch.

03 How to land H³ for an executive *seeing AI sprawl.*

The version of H³ that matters to your Sponsor right now. Use these hooks. Notice why the words in the second block tend not to land. Lead with their pain, not the mechanics.

HOOKS THAT LAND

- **"It's a rhythm, not a project."** Cycles, not roadmaps. Three on-site days are the visible part; the named-owner work between cycles is where outcomes happen.
- **"Cycle 2 only runs if Cycle 1 produced motion you can see."** The Sponsor is not buying a multi-year commitment. They are funding one cycle. Evidence-funded.
- **"Named owners step up in the room."** Adoption survives past the on-site days because someone owns each decision visibly, on a status page everyone can see, for three to six months.
- **"There is one status page. The Sponsor watches it grow, or stall, in the open."** Replaces the strategy deck.

LANGUAGE THAT DOESN'T CARRY

"Maturity model," "AI strategy roadmap," "transformation programme," "centre of excellence as the destination," "innovation framework," "thought leadership," "AI day," "ambition setting." All of these signal categories H³ is structurally different from. Your Sponsor has heard them all and watched them produce slides; the words do not carry the weight they used to.

WHAT NOT TO LEAD WITH

- **Don't open with mechanics.** "Open Space plus hackathon plus status page" loses an exec in eight seconds. Open with the executive's pain: pilots dying after the demo, six teams running their own AI tooling on personal cards, the same three blockers at the next steering review.
- **Don't open with the consultant.** Open with the cycle. The Sponsor is buying the rhythm, not the facilitator.
- **Don't oversell Cycle 1.** Don't promise a specific ROI. The H³ deal shape is "fund one cycle, decide on evidence." Promising a number undermines the deal shape and your own credibility.

04 What your Sponsor is mentally *comparing H³ against.*

Your Sponsor has been pitched two or three of these in the last twelve months. When they push back on H³, they are usually defending one of the four. Know which one, and you can respond.

01 Big-consultancy transformation programme (McKinsey, BCG, Bain, Accenture, Deloitte, EY, or any of the rest).

WHAT IT OFFERS	Cross-industry benchmarks the organisation would not otherwise see. A horizontal strategic view across many parts of the business at once. A senior team that can move several workstreams in parallel. Brand-name reassurance for the board ("we have [firm] doing this"), which is a genuine product for some Sponsors even when nobody admits it; if that legitimacy is what they are actually buying, it is fine to name out loud.
WHERE THE WORK-SHAPE DISAGREES WITH H³	Consultancy engagements are sized as one large bet, consultant-owned, milestone-funded across a 9-to-18-month SOW. H³ is sized as small bets, Sponsor-owned, evidence-funded one cycle at a time. Different theories of adoption: the consultancy theory says "design the right strategy, hand it to the organisation." The H³ theory says "strategy emerges from named-owner adoption that compounds cycle by cycle." Both produce slides. Only one keeps producing motion after the consultants leave.
H³ POSITION	If your Sponsor is buying board-facing legitimacy and a horizontal strategy view, the consultancy is the right call and you should not pitch H³ against it. If your Sponsor is buying adoption that compounds inside the operating units, the work-shape is different and H³ is the right call. **The question to put back to your Sponsor is: "Which of those two are you actually buying?"**

02 In-house AI centre of excellence (or AI Office, AI Lab, AI Practice, Centre for AI Capability).

WHAT IT OFFERS	A real spine for AI capability: shared standards, vendor-management leverage, governance, a place to develop deep expertise, a clear ownership home for the AI portfolio. Working CoEs are valuable, and the practitioners inside them are usually some of the sharpest people in the organisation.
WHERE FRICTION SHOWS UP	The handoff from a CoE to operating units is where AI adoption most often stalls. The CoE proves a capability works on a pilot; the operating teams never quite internalise it because the work to land it in their day-to-day is unowned, and the CoE's mandate does not usually extend into other teams' calendars. This is structural, not a CoE failing; it shows up in even the strongest centres because the CoE's job is capability, not adoption.
H³ POSITION	**Complementary, not alternative.** H³ provides the named-owner rhythm that converts CoE-validated capability into operating-unit adoption. In practice, CoE staff are often the strongest Coach candidates (because the AI expertise is theirs), operating-unit Participants are often the strongest named owners (because the operational work is theirs), and the CoE lead is often the right co-Sponsor alongside the operational executive. The strongest version is **CoE as the capability spine, H³ as the cycle that lands it.**

03 Vendor-led tool rollout (Copilot for everyone, a Cursor licence pool, Glean across the organisation, [vendor] enterprise deployment).

WHAT IT OFFERS	Concrete capability landing in the organisation. Vendor support, training resources, well-tested deployment patterns, a clear unit of decision ("we're licensing X for Y teams"). Modern AI tools are genuinely useful and the vendors behind them are usually serious about adoption support; this is real value.
WHERE FRICTION SHOWS UP	A tool reaches the organisation through a licence agreement; it reaches the work through a thousand small adoption decisions inside operating teams. That second part is where rollouts most often stall: the tool gets bought, a handful of teams pick it up, most don't, and six months later usage is concentrated in the same teams that would have found it on their own. This is structural, not a vendor failing; even the strongest tools hit it.
H³ POSITION	**Complementary, not alternative.** H³ does not replace tool rollouts; it provides the named-owner cycle that turns a licence into actual adoption inside operating teams. In practice, the tool vendor and the internal rollout team are often the strongest contributors at Hack day, and the rollout lead is often the right co-Sponsor or named-owner partner. The strongest version is **vendor rollout as the substrate, H³ as the rhythm that lands it.**

04 Status quo + ad-hoc training.

IN ONE LINE	Cheap, low-friction, no political risk. Produces nothing measurable; the same pilots, the same review cycles, six months later. **If your Sponsor is comfortable waiting another year for adoption that won't compound, this is the cheapest option. H³ is for executives who have read the room and decided they can't.**

05 The *ready-to-send email.*

Edit the first paragraph to match how you actually talk to your Sponsor. Don't let the rest sound templated. Pick one subject line, paste the body, attach the executive folder PDF, send.

A NOTE FOR THE CHAMPION

If your Sponsor is curious enough to download this kit themselves, they will see this template verbatim. Personalise the first and last paragraphs enough that what you send reads as you, not as a paste. The middle paragraphs are written to be lifted as-is; they explain H³ accurately and your Sponsor reading them twice (once in your email, once in the kit) reinforces rather than undermines.

SUBJECT-LINE VARIANTS (PICK ONE)

- AI experimentation is everywhere. Adoption isn't. Worth 30 minutes.
- A different shape for AI adoption that doesn't end in another deck
- Bringing this to your attention before [board meeting / quarterly review / next steering]

Hi [SPONSOR NAME],

[EDIT THIS PARAGRAPH. One or two sentences in your own voice that tie to something specific you have both seen recently. Example: "After our review last week of where the Copilot pilot landed (and didn't land), I went looking for what other organisations are doing about the same shape of problem."]

What I found is called H³ ("Harvest, Hack, Harness"). It is a repeatable cycle for AI adoption: three on-site days where the people who actually use AI in their work surface what is working and decide what to adopt or kill, then three to six months where named owners carry those decisions into the live system, with you as the air cover. The next cycle opens on visible evidence. **Cycle 2 only runs if Cycle 1 produces motion you can see, on a status page everyone watches.**

It rejects the shapes we have already tried (maturity models, off-sites, multi-year roadmaps), and it bets the Sponsor against the work: one fixed price for Cycle 1, no Cycle 2 unless the evidence is there.

Two artefacts attached or linked:

1-page overview: `harvesthackharness.ai/h3-cycle-one-pager.pdf`

5-page executive folder: `harvesthackharness.ai/h3-executive-folder.pdf`

If it lands, the next move is five minutes with the self-qualifier (`harvesthackharness.ai/h3-sponsor-self-qualifier.pdf`), then a 30-minute discovery call. The honest answer might be "not this quarter," and that's also a clean outcome.

[YOUR NAME]

06 Tactics for *the champion.*

What to do before, during, and after the pitch. Half of these are political reads, not pitch craft. Read them all once before you compose the email.

PICKING THE RIGHT SPONSOR

The right Sponsor has **both** signing authority **and** air-cover capability. Most orgs have execs who have one but not the other. Check: authority (can they fund Cycle 1 within their current quarter without a procurement queue?), air-cover capability (when a named owner needs procurement help / security fast-track / time / budget on the spot, can they actually unblock it?), and operational reach (do the people who would attend Cycle 1 work for them, directly or two layers down?).
Mismatch signals: "innovation lead" with no operational team, "AI champion" with no budget, CTO whose remit is read-only architecture, COO who delegates AI entirely. None of these are bad roles; they are simply not the role H³ depends on for its first cycle.

TIMING THE PITCH

- **After a stalled pilot.** Right after a Copilot/Cursor/whatever review where the answer was "we don't know what to do with this": maximum receptivity.
- **Before the next budget cycle.** Cycle 1 needs to land in the budget; pitching during Q4 close is too late.
- **After AI hits the board agenda.** When your Sponsor has been asked "what are we doing about AI?" by their board, they need an answer. H³ is an answer.
- **Avoid:** mid-reorg, immediately after a layoff, two weeks before vacation, the day a competitor announces something splashy.

PUSHBACKS AND ONE-LINE RESPONSES

"We tried something like this." → Different shape. Cycle-based, named owners, status page. Worth 30 minutes to see if the difference matters.

"No budget for new initiatives." → Cycle 1 is one fixed price. Cycle 2 only runs if Cycle 1 produced motion. The bet stays small.

"Send me a deck." → There is no deck. There is a 5-page executive folder I sent. Worth 5 minutes.

"Let me think about it." → Take 5 minutes for the self-qualifier. The honest answer might be "not this quarter," and that's fine.

"Wrong quarter." → Self-qualifier first. If the conditions are there, the call is worth scheduling regardless of which quarter.

IF THE OBVIOUS SPONSOR IS WRONG

- Route through a peer with operational reach (COO if your CTO is read-only).
- Recruit a second champion at their level so the Sponsor hears about H³ from two directions.
- Park it. The wrong Sponsor cannot succeed at H³ no matter how well you pitch. A reluctant yes that breaks Cycle 1 burns the relationship.

WHEN TO STOP PUSHING

A Sponsor who says yes only after pressure will not provide live air cover when it actually costs them something. Their reluctant yes produces a stalled Cycle 1 and a Sponsor who blames the framework. **Better outcome: clean no, come back next quarter when the conditions are there.**

07 What you do *once the Sponsor says yes.*

Your role shifts from advocate to facilitator. Six things to do in the first month, plus a single ongoing commitment across the gap.

The first month

01 **Make the introduction.** Send the calendar invite for the discovery call. Forward the self-qualifier link to your Sponsor so they take the five-minute self-check before the call.

02 **Step back from the discovery call itself.** The call works best as a direct conversation between your Sponsor and the H³ facilitator. Your presence in the room would shift the dialogue toward justifying the introduction rather than honestly assessing fit, which is the opposite of what either side needs.

03 **Hold the calendar.** Cycle 1 takes roughly twenty days end-to-end including the three calendar days on site, pre-work, and closeout. Help your Sponsor block the right three days early, before something else takes them.

04 **Help shortlist the named-owner candidates.** The Sponsor's intake form asks them to list people likely to step up as named owners. You probably know the room better than they do. Make the list together.

05 **Brief the right peers ahead of the on-site.** Two-line message to anyone in the cohort: "I helped get this organised. It is three calendar days plus follow-through; here is why it is different. No prep required." Removes friction.

06 **Stay visible during the on-site, ambient during the gap.** You attend Cycle 1 as a Participant, not as the named owner of every decision. Named owners must volunteer in the room; they cannot be appointed by you. After the on-site, your job is presence, not co-ownership.

Ongoing, across the three to six month gap

Schedule a 15-minute check-in with your Sponsor every month. Cycle 1 fails when the Sponsor's attention drifts to the next thing in month three or four. Your monthly check-in is one sentence and one slide: "Here is where the status page is. Three commitments need your air cover this month, and one named owner is stuck."

If the Sponsor stops showing up to those check-ins, Cycle 2 is in danger. That is your signal to escalate inside your own head: did we pick the right Sponsor? Worth re-reading the worksheet from page 2.

THE DEEPER MATERIALS, IN THE ORDER YOUR SPONSOR WILL READ THEM

→ Five-minute self-check before they decide: harvesthackharness.ai/h3-sponsor-self-qualifier.pdf

→ One-page overview: harvesthackharness.ai/h3-cycle-one-pager.pdf

→ Five-page executive folder: harvesthackharness.ai/h3-executive-folder.pdf

The next move once the worksheet on page 2 reads all-Yes: the email on page 5.

